

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSM-03 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 EB-07 A-01 AID-05 CCO-00 DHA-02 OC-06
OMB-01 OPR-02 SCA-01 MCT-01 SY-05 USSS-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
IO-13 TRSE-00 COME-00 IGA-02 /111 W
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O P 151522Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2534
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 185
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
CIA WASHDC
COMSIXTHFLT
COMPHIBRON SIX
COM THREE FOUR MAU
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 8875

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION DECEMBER 14-15

REF: BEIRUT 8824 (DTG 131608Z DEC 76)

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT SARKIS PRESENTED PLAN FOR HEAVY
WEAPONS COLLECTION TO QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE WHICH MET
DEC 14, BUT DECISION ON ISSUE POSTPONED UNTIL DEC 16.
INTRA-CHRISTIAN INCIDENTS CONTINUE AND LEBANESE FRONT
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FORMS "COURT OF HONOR" TO DEAL WITH SKIRMISHES AND AFFIRMS

NATIONAL LIBERAL-PHALANGIST UNITY. LARGE FORCES OF SYRIAN ARMY REPORTEDLY ENTERED LEBANON DEC 11-13, BUT THIS NOT CONFIRMED. ASF DENIES PRESS REPORTS OF MOVEMENT OF SYMBOLIC FORCES IN SOUTH. ISF DIRGEN CONTINUES EFFORTS IMPROVE INTERNAL SECURITY. EDDE ADDRESSES OPEN LETTER TO SARKIS REGARDING RECENT ATTEMPTS ON HIS LIFE. SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF SARKIS, GHASSAN TUEINI, TRAVELS TO US TO DISCUSS AID; AL-HUSS PLANS VISIT SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, AND UAE FOR SIMILAR DISCUSSIONS. SOVIET AMBASSADOR RETURNED DEC 14. CHASE MANHATTAN BANK OPERATIONAL. END SUMMARY.

2. FIRST QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE MEETING. QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE MET FOR FIRST TIME DEC 14 UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP PRESIDENT SARKIS AND FOCUSED ON TURNOVER OF HEAVY WEAPONS. IN ATTENDANCE WERE: LT. GEN. ALI AL SHAER, SAUDI AMBASSADOR; SHEIKH ABDEL HAMID AL BAIJAN, KUWAIT AMBASSADOR; AHMED LOTFI AL METWALLI, EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR; AND COL MOHAMMED AL KHOLY, SYRIAN REPRESENTATIVE. ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, PRESIDENT SARKIS PRESENTED FOLLOWING PLAN TO COMMITTEE: 1) PARTIES SHOULD PROVIDE LISTS OF THEIR HEAVY WEAPONS AND ASSEMBLE WEAPONS IN DESIGNATED AREAS AWAY FROM INHABITED REGIONS FIVE TO SEVEN DAYS AFTER NOTIFICATION OF COMMITTEE'S FINAL DECISION; 2) ONE MONTH AFTER ASSEMBLING HEAVY ARMS, THEY MUST BE TURNED OVER TO ASF; 3) ARMS AND MATERIEL WHICH FORMERLY BELONGED TO LEBANESE ARMED FORCES WOULD BE RETURNED TO THEM; AND 4) WEAPONS BOUGHT BY VARIOUS PARTIES WOULD EITHER BE REPURCHASED BY THE STATE AT A NOMINAL PRICE OR SOLD ABROAD. FINAL DECISION TO INSTITUTE ASSEMBLY OF ARMS WAS POSTPONED UNTIL DEC 16, WHEN COMMITTEE WILL AGAIN MEET. VARIOUS PAPERS REPORT REASONS FOR POSTPONEMENT INCLUDE: 1) REQUEST BY KFUR FRONT (CHRISTIAN) TO IMPLEMENT CAIRO ACCORDS; 2) KFUR FRONT INSISTENCE THAT PALESTINIAN WEAPONS BE COLLECTED FIRST; AND 3) A REQUEST, AGAIN FROM THE LEBANESE FRONT, THAT VARIOUS PARTIES NOT BE PERMITTED TO PROVIDE LISTS OF THEIR OWN WEAPONS WITHOUT OUTSIDE CONFIRMATION.

3. RIGHTIST CAMP ACTIVITIES. SOME INTRA-CHRISTIAN FEUDING CONTINUED. CAMILLE CHAMOUN DECLARED THAT PRESS EXAGGERATED
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IMPORTANCE OF DEC 12 INCCDENT INVOLVING HIS CHAUFFEUR/BODY-GUARD AND MOTORCYCLIST PIERRE SOKHAN. ASF ARMORED VEHICLES ENTERED NEIGHBORHOOD OF PIERRE SOKHAN FUNERAL DEC 14 AND ORDERED END OF FIRING ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS AS SIGN OF MOURNING. FUNERAL THEN WENT OFF WITHOUT INCIDENT. IN SEPARATE INCIDENTS DEC 13, PASSING CARS OPENED FIRE ON PICTURE OF CAMILLE CHAMOUN ON BUILDING IN ASHRAFIYA AND LATER AT A NATIONAL LIBERAL OFFICE. IN EARLY MORNING HOURS

DEC 14, CAR OF PHALANGE POLITBURO MEMBER KARIM PAKRADUNI BLOWN UP IN ASHRAFIYA, BUT THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES. "UNITED COMMAND OF THE LEBANESE FORCES" HELD MEETING LATE DEC 14, ATTENDED BY CAMILLE CHAMOUN, PIERRE AND BECHIR GEMAYEL, ABU ARZ, AND DANY CHAMOUN AMONG OTHERS. MEETING DECIDED ON CREATION OF COURT OF HONOR TO RULE ON INCIDENTS BETWEEN MEMBERS AND ENDORSED MEASURES TO FURTHER UNIFY FORCES IN UNITED COMMAND, INCLUDING ADOPTION OF COMMON UNIFORMS. NO INDICATION GIVEN AS TO WHETHER DANY CHAMOUN REVERSED HIS ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWAL OF "TIGERS" FROM COMMAND.

4. SYRIAN ARMY ELEMENTS IN LEBANON? VARIOUS SOURCES HAVE REPORTED ENTRY OF LARGE CONTINGENT OF SYRIAN ARMY INTO LEBANON DURING PERIOD DEC 11-13. ON DEC 12 DATT OBSERVED 60-VEHICLE CONVOY, CONSISTING OF HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT UNITS BELONGING TO THIRD ARMORED DIVISION ON BEIRUT-DAMASCUS HIGHWAY HEADING TOWARD BEIRUT; OTHER REPORTS STATE PORTIONS OF 70TH BRIGADE MAY HAVE ENTERED LEBANON ON DEC 11 AND 13. COMMENT: IF THIS BRIGADE HAS ACTUALLY ENTERED LEBANON, IT WOULD INCREASE SYRIAN STRENGTH TO APPROXIMATELY 28,000 MEN. PRESENCE OF THIS NEW BRIGADE NOT YET CONFIRMED, AND MOVEMENT MAY BE PART OF SOME RECENT CONSOLIDATIONS AND RE-POSITIONING OF SYRIAN FORCES TO FACILITATE INTERNAL COMMAND AND CONTROL AND BE IN BETTER POSITION TO MONITOR HEAVY WEAPONS COLLECTION.

5. THE SOUTH. AL MOHARRIR REPORTED DEC 15 THAT A "SYMBOLIC ASF FORCE SHALL TAKE UP POSITIONS TODAY IN DEFINED LOCALITIES IN THE SOUTH." ASF HEADQUARTERS IN BEIRUT, HOWEVER, DENIES MOVEMENT OF ANY FORCES OTHER THAN LOCAL REPOSITIONING OF SOME SYRIAN UNITS PREVIOUSLY IN SIDON. THERE NO REPORTS OF HEAVY MILITARY ACTIVITY IN SOUTH: BOMB EXPLODED IN SMALL VILLAGE
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NEAR AYN IBL, AND THERE SOME OCCASIONAL SMALL ARMS FIRING IN VICINITY OF MARJAYUN. SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE KAMAL AL-ASSAD, WHO DISCUSSED SOUTHERN SITUATION WITH PRESIDENT ASAD IN DAMASCUS DEC 13, TOLD PRESS ON HIS RETURN THAT SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON IS VERY GRAVE.

6. SECURITY SITUATION. ISF DIRE GEN HISHAM SHAAR MET DEC 14 WITH INTERIOR MIN SALMAN AND SURETE DIRGEN COL ANTOINE DAHDAH TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS OF EQUIPMENT, ORGANIZATION AND PREPARATION OF PRISONS FOR USE. LATER IN DAY, SHAAR TRAVELED TO TRIPOLI WHERE HE OBTAINED USE OF FORMER GOVERNMENT PRISON FOR ISF DETAINEES. ASF FORCES

ARRESTED FIVE PERSONS INVOLVED IN GUNFIRE EXCHANGE IN DOWNTOWN SIDON DEC 14 ANN AARE INVESTIGATING EXPLOSION THERE

SAME DAY. MILITARY TRIBUNAL CONTINUES TO HEAR CASES OF
CEASEFIRE REGULATION VIOLATORS. PRESS REPORT HEAVY FIRING
IN HAMRA AREA OF WEST BEIRUT LATE EVENING DEC 14, BUT
ORIGIN UNKNOWN.

7. RAYMOND EDDE. IN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDEN SARKIS
PUBLISHED DEC 14, EDDE EMPHASIZED THAT SINCE TIME SYRIAN
ARMY CHARGED WITH PROTECTION OF INFORMATION MINISTRY NEAR
HIS HOME, HE HAS BEEN VICTIM OF SEVERAL INCIDENTS. HE ASKED
FOR PRECISE DEFINITION OF ASF DUTIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF
SYRIANS. KAMAL JUNBLATT WAS AMONG THOSE WHO VISITED EDDE TO
PRESENT CONDOLENCES ON LATEST ATTEMPT ON EDDE'S LIFE.

8. RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE. DELEGATION HEADED BY
GHASSAN TUEINI, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF PRESIDENT SARKIS,
DEPARTED FOR US DEC 13 TO DISCUSS PROJECTED US AID FOR LEBANON.
PRIMIN AL-HUSS PLANS TRAVEL DEC 17 TO SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT,
AND UAE, ALSO TO DISCUSS AID FOR LEBANON. DURING MEETING
BETWEEN AL-HUSS AND INFORMATION MIN SAAN DEC 13, DECISION
TAKEN TO PROVIDE AID FOR DAMAGED HOUSING MAINLY IN FORM OF
LOANS. IN L'ORIENT-LE JOUR ARTICLE DEC 15, GEORGES
ASSEILY, HEAD OF ASSOCIATION OF LEBANESE
INDUSTRIALISTS, SAID PRELIMINARY STUDY SHOWED ONLY 25 TO
30 PERCENT OF LEBANESE ENTERPRISES HAD BEEN DAMAGED
DURING WAR.

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9. SOVIET AMBASSADOR RETURNS. SOVIET AMBASSADOR ALEXANDER
SOLDATOV RETURNED TO BEIRUT DEC 14, HAVING BEEN ABSENT
SINCE SEPTEMBER 2.

10. ANOTHER BANK OPENS. CHASE MANHATTAN BANK ANNOUNCED
IT HAS BEEN OPEN SINCE NOVEMBER 29 IN TWO TEMPORARY LOCATIONS,
ONE IN WEST BEIRUT AND OTHER IN BEIT MERY.
HOUGHTON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY, PROGRESS REPORTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT08875
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760461-1219
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761238/aaaabgxd.tel
Line Count: 209
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BEIRUT 8824
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <09 SEP 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANESE SITUATION DECEMBER 14-15
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006